

SEMINOLE NEGRO INDIANS, MACABEBES, AND CIVILIAN IRREGULARS:  
MODELS FOR THE FUTURE EMPLOYMENT OF INDIGENOUS FORCES

A thesis presented to the Faculty of the U.S. Army  
Command and General Staff College in partial  
fulfillment of the requirements for the  
degree

MASTER OF MILITARY ART AND SCIENCE

by

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B.A., Syracuse University, Syracuse, New York, 1982

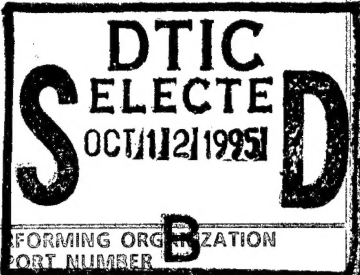
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## ABSTRACT

SEMINOLE NEGRO INDIANS, MACABEBES, AND CIVILIAN IRREGULARS: MODELS FOR THE FUTURE EMPLOYMENT OF INDIGENOUS FORCES by MAJ Victor Holman, USA, 78 pages.

This study investigates the history of employing indigenous people as military units in combat. It reviews the circumstances surrounding the employment of people as auxiliary and irregular units. It also examines the wisdom of employing indigenous people in future conflicts given the shift in the current security environment. Examples are drawn from three different U.S. conflicts: the Indian Wars of the nineteenth century, the Philippine Insurrection in 1898, and the Vietnam conflict.

It begins with the U.S. Army precedent set by enlisting the Seminole Negro Indians as scouts in 1866. The study then examines subsequent indigenous personnel employed by the U.S. military, to include the Macabebe Scouts in the Philippines and the Civilian Irregular Defense Group in Vietnam.

This thesis highlights key figures in each conflict to include John Horse a Seminole leader; and Lieutenant John Lapham Bullis in the Indian Wars, General Henry Lawton and Lieutenant M. A. Batson in the Philippine Insurrection; and Colonel Edward G. Lansdale, Lieutenant Colonel Arthur Simons, and Colonel Gilbert Layton in Vietnam.

All three groups of indigenous forces were cited for providing a great deal of additional intelligence and firepower to their respective U.S. commander, thereby lending credence to possibly continuing their use.

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

Currently, the United States Army is in a period of great structural and strategic change. This is due mainly to a shift in the global balance of military and economic power. Previously, the military efforts of the United States and her NATO allies were primarily focused on a single threat--the Soviet Union. With the recent collapse of the Soviet Union and the reunification of East and West Germany, multiple regional conflicts and operations other than war (OOTW) have become the major focus for the U.S. military. In addition, changes within the U.S. military have been significant. This most recent drawdown has brought decreased resources, such as congressional funding, equipment acquisition, and personnel accessions. Furthermore, gaining the support of the American people for conflicts that they do not see as vital to U.S. interests has become more difficult. American interests in European affairs, for example, are seen as long-standing, vital, and tied to America's own affairs. The U.S. has economic, cultural, and political connections to Europe. Although these ties also exist between the United States and other regions, the link is not always apparent to the American populace.

The military is utilizing several innovative techniques to overcome personnel and equipment shortfalls. For example, training exercises and actual mobilizations now regularly include joint and

combined forces. Forces are designated joint when there are two or more branches of service involved, Such as Army and Air Force, Army and Navy, or Navy and Air Force. Combined force operations involve military forces from two or more nations. Also, sophisticated weaponry has allowed the United States and its allies to fight when outnumbered and still win. As a combat multiplier, technology has provided some limited advantages over potential adversaries. This was demonstrated most recently in Operation Desert Storm.

Although the military has found several ways to overcome the previously mentioned shortfalls, there is another asset that should be considered. That asset is the employment of indigenous auxiliary and irregular troops. Indigenous auxiliary troops are foreign regular army soldiers who are in the service of a country (other than their own) that is at war. Indigenous irregular troops are soldiers who are not members of a regular professional army. Given the current conditions of decreased resources and the increased likelihood of small regional conflicts the U.S. military should vigorously pursue the use of auxiliary and irregular troops both in war and operations other than war (OOTW), (when appropriate), because of the advantages they afford the commander.

The Center for Army Lessons Learned at Fort Leavenworth has concluded that:

Several military and political elements combine to ensure Low Intensity Conflict (LIC) [or OOTW] is the most likely form of confrontation the U.S. Army will face in the near future. These elements include:



- The capabilities of the superpowers, both nuclear and non-nuclear, and the ability to project them around the world, have made high-intensity conflict too costly.
- The deep social, economic, and political problems of Third World nations create fertile ground for developing insurgencies and other conflicts which impact adversely on U.S. interest.
- The huge economic and social impact of the international drug business, all point to an expanding U.S. involvement in the LIC arena.<sup>1</sup>

**TABLE 1**  
**PROBABILITY OF RISK**

		LEVEL OF RISK		
		LOW	MODERATE	HIGH
P r o b a b i l i t y c e	HIGH			
	Terrorism	—	•	
	Insurgency	—	•	
	Small Regional Conflict		—	•
	Major Conventional War			—
	Nuclear Exchange			—
LOW				

Note: Table 1 shows the probability of a given type of conflict occurring and the associated corresponding level of risk.

### Framework

The decision to initiate a major policy, such as the employment of indigenous troops within the army, can be done only after much consideration and study. American political and military leaders would need to be provided with critical decision criteria on the specific use of indigenous auxiliary and irregular troops. In addition, for the purposes of this research, it will be assumed that the criteria for deciding to employ indigenous units have been met. Employment criteria

should consider: (1) the circumstances that surrounds the conflict; (2) the diplomatic, informational, and economic instruments of power; (3) the specific groups to be employed as auxiliaries and irregulars; and (4) the approval for their use by the legitimate indigenous government. This paper will be concerned with employing indigenous forces to augment a commander's campaign as mission. Indigenous forces can be employed to meet three primary needs:

1. Gather detailed intelligence about the enemy force.
2. Provide detailed information about the area of operations.
3. Provide additional fire power for the U.S. force commander.

#### The Research Question

How does the U.S. military overcome limited human resources and significant geo-political changes and still enhance current capabilities on the battlefield through the use of indigenous people as auxiliary and irregular troops?

This study will explore three historical cases in which the U.S. Army employed indigenous auxiliary or irregular forces to achieve tactical success on the battlefield. The research will then examine the ability to maximize this policy in the future. This paper will begin by reviewing the U.S. Army's early decision to use Indians as scouts during the Indian Wars of the nineteenth century along the Texas and Mexican border. As a point of departure, this study will review the origin, formation, employment, and performance of the Seminole Negro Indian scouts. The Macabebe Scouts of the Philippine Insurrection and the Civilian Irregular Defense Group (CIDG) of the Vietnam conflict will also be examined.

### Background

The decision to augment an army with indigenous troops is neither new nor is it uniquely American. The armies of England, France, and Germany by example have all formed and employed indigenous auxiliary and irregular troops in past centuries. However, the idea is still viewed as slightly unorthodox.

A desire to increase the likelihood of success in combat has always driven students of the profession of arms to seek ways to improve for the next battle. In combat, the ability to achieve success sometimes arises from timely improvisations in theory, policy, doctrine, tactics, equipment, or organization. Improvements also arise from major changes in the social or political environment. It is in this current changing environment that the U.S. military is now deeply involved.

America and her allies are facing a transformation in the security environment paradigm. The change was caused in part by the end of the "Cold War" and the dissolution of the Soviet Union as well as by a major global shift in U.S. political and military strategies. In addition, the U.S. military has become increasingly involved with relatively small regional conflicts, such as Bosnia and operations other than war (OOTW) as in Somalia, Rwanda, and Haiti.

Given the emerging environment of change and uncertainty, military leaders should review previous conflicts for aspects of innovation and success found in the military use of indigenous people as auxiliary and irregular forces. The use of forces such as the Seminole Negro Indian scouts, the Macabebe scouts, and the Civilian Irregular Defense Group have produced outstanding results and provided a wide range of additional capabilities to the commander. All three groups became

significant force multipliers by serving as interpreters, guides, scouts, light infantry, and guerrilla forces.

### Limitations

This paper will focus on the utilization of indigenous auxiliary and irregular units in combat by the U.S. military and will examine the use of these units from 1866 until 1970. Information will be derived from both primary and secondary source; books, articles, and government records. This paper includes no classified information.

### Delimitations

Throughout history, there have been several factors that have led to American military success on the battlefield. This study will examine one key aspect of that combat success, the use of specific indigenous auxiliary and irregular units in combat. This study will highlight the scouting and combat roles of only the Seminole Negro Indian Scouts during the Indian Wars, the Macabebe Scouts during the Philippine Insurrection, and the Civilian Irregular Defense Group during the Vietnam conflict.

This study will not include the Korean War and the Korean Augmentation to the United States Army (KATUSA) Program. The Korean soldiers who were assigned to understrength U.S. Army units were not considered auxiliary or irregular troops. They were used as replacements in U.S. units and served alongside American soldiers. Determining whether or not irregular troops would have influenced the outcome of the Korean War could be the genesis of another study.

### Significance of the Study

The significance of this study can be realized when viewed against the backdrop of the shifting global political environment. The United States is planning for multiple regional conflicts and numerous OOTW scenarios. The military would be prudent to utilize the capabilities of indigenous auxiliary and irregular units when appropriate to augment American forces. The doctrinal implications of employing indigenous units will be discussed more fully in Chapter Five. In addition, auxiliary and irregular troops both complement and support the dynamics of combat power and the battlefield operating systems (BOS).<sup>2</sup>

The dynamics of combat power consist of maneuver, firepower, protection, and leadership. Indigenous units can be used to influence friendly maneuver, impede enemy movement, increase friendly firepower, and enhance force protection by providing intelligence to the commander. The battlefield operating systems include intelligence, maneuver, fire support, air defense, mobility, logistics, and battle command. Again, indigenous troops can significantly enhance intelligence gathering capabilities and facilitate the maneuver of friendly units against enemy troops.

Small regional conflicts and operations other than war have again become the major focal points for the military since the breakup of the Soviet Union and the reunification of East and West Germany. The U.S. Army could quite easily find itself involved in conflicts at nearly any point on the globe. The military must identify how to maintain its level of readiness with fewer resources. A review of previous conflicts for important lessons could help to provide a perspective on how to

achieve this goal. Critical information could be gathered by reviewing both world and military history.

### Literature Review

Although there is a significant amount of material written about the use of irregular units in combat, it is often intermixed with other topics. Information about the Seminole Negro Indian Scouts, the Macabebe Scouts, and Civilian Irregular Defense Group is usually embedded in literature that focuses primarily on other topics. Currently, there exists a gap in the literature that reviews both previous and future employment of indigenous forces by the United States Army.

The Seminole Scouts are examined in writings that cover the experience of blacks in the military, Native Americans, the Seminole Wars, or border skirmishes between the United States and Mexico. The Macabebe Scouts are usually mentioned as a force that began as an experiment lead by Lieutenant M. A. Batson of the Fourth Cavalry Regiment. There are also several articles in The Infantry Journal about the employment of Filipino scouts immediately following the insurrection in 1898. Finally, the Civilian Irregular Defense Group is mainly referred to as only one of the several indigenous auxiliary or irregular troop programs initiated in Vietnam.

Many sources review the French Army's interaction with irregular forces in Vietnam before the intervention of the United States. There is also a great deal of discussion about the political environment surrounding the Vietnam conflict.

### Research Methodology

This paper will examine three parallel case studies to draw conclusions regarding the employment of indigenous auxiliary and irregular forces. The study begins with the primary question: How can the U.S. military enhance its capability through the use of indigenous people as auxiliary and irregular troops?

Through the three case studies, this paper will look at the formation of indigenous units, the employment of indigenous people in combat and the performance of those units. Insights will be drawn by reviewing the historical use of indigenous auxiliary and irregular units in combat. The paper will conclude with a comparative analysis of the use of indigenous forces and consideration of how they might be used in the future.

### Endnotes

<sup>1</sup>Bulletin. Center for Army Lessons Learned, Combined Arms Training Activity, Fort Leavenworth, KS. 1.

<sup>2</sup>U.S. Army, FM 100-5, Operations (Washington: Department of the Army, 1993), 2-10 to 2-15.



## CHAPTER 2

### SEMINOLE NEGRO INDIAN SCOUTS

Before the First and Second Seminole Wars in the antebellum period of U.S. history, bands of escaped negro slaves coexisted in communities with former Creek Indians in Florida. The word "seminole" in the Creek language means "runaway." The word was used by Creeks when discussing the recapture of escaped African slaves with slave owners. The Creeks also used the word "seminole" when referring to that portion of Creeks who left their group after tribal conflicts. Now, when the term Seminole is used, it applies to both the African slaves and the dissenter Creek Indians.

Soldiers who returned to their homes after the First Seminole War noted the bravery and fighting spirit of these people. Seminole chief Osceola refused to honor the Treaty of Paynes Landing with the United States government which stated that the Seminoles would agree to be moved out west in 1835 into the Indian Territory.

No Seminole Indian or Negro warrior had surrendered. They had fought gallantly, they had died freely; but they preferred death to that slavery which they knew would follow surrender.<sup>1</sup>

The Seminole Wars served as a common struggle that galvanized the Black and Red Seminoles into one people. In all there were three Seminole Wars fought during the years 1817-1819, 1835-1842, and 1855-1858. General Andrew Jackson was sent to Florida in 1818 to dominate the

Seminole Indians and capture the town of Pensacola. In 1819, Florida became a U.S. Territory. The Seminoles forfeited their land in northern Florida to the United States government and relocated into southern Florida. It must be noted that in 1836, General Thomas S. Jesup employed Creek Indians as combatants during the Seminole War. In 1835-1836 the army organized and mustered 2,456 Creeks as volunteers in southern Georgia and Florida. In 1838, John Horse, a leader of the Seminoles, decided to make peace with the United States. In 1830 the Indian Removal Act allowed the government to legally force the southeastern tribes to relocate west of the Mississippi River in Indian Territory, present-day Oklahoma. After the third Seminole War in 1858, most of the few remaining Seminole Indians allowed themselves to be relocated west of the Mississippi River in Indian Territory.

The Seminole Wars produced such skilled Indian leaders as Abraham, John Horse, John Kibbets, Osceola, Wild Cat, Talmeco-Hadjo, Arpeika, and Tiger Tail. These warriors would be called upon again to defend their people in the Indian Territory and Mexico. John Horse and John Kibbets would eventually lead several groups of Seminoles back to Texas, where they would serve as scouts for the United States Army.

Both the Red and Black Seminoles found the Indian Territory to be an inhospitable place. The Red Seminoles were reunited with the Creek Indians (their historic adversary) and the Cherokee Indians. Fighting again erupted among the three groups. In 1849, after the U.S. government decided that the Black Seminoles were still subject to recapture as escaped slaves, the Black Seminoles faced kidnaping by whites and Indians alike. Amid mounting pressure, John Horse and Wild Cat again demonstrated their leadership by guiding nearly seven hundred

of their people, including both Red and Black Seminoles, to safety in Mexico where slavery had been illegal since 1829.<sup>2</sup>

### Formation

While living in Mexico, the Seminoles were employed as a security force by the Mexican military along the Rio Grande River. In exchange for their services, President Santa Anna provided them with supplies and some land in the State of Coahuila. Later, the Seminoles relocated to Nacimiento, Mexico, near the Santa Rosa Mountains.

The Seminoles performed their duties in a superior fashion while serving in Mexico. The Mexican government praised the Seminoles for their "faithful and useful assistance to military operations," and described them as "industrious workers."<sup>3</sup>

The Seminole scouting missions in the desert for the Mexican government revealed several unknown watering holes, trails, and potential campsites. This information would later be of particular value to the Seminoles as scouts for the United States. Although life was relatively comfortable in Mexico, the Seminoles still desired to live in the United States.

At the end of the American Civil War, the U.S. government focused renewed attention on the reconstruction of the southern states and expansion of the western territory. However, two circumstances caused the government particular trouble in the west: hostile Indian tribes and harsh, uncharted lands.

In 1870, the U.S. Army faced an enormous task in meeting all of its required missions with a Regular Army force of only 2,488 officers and 34,870 enlisted soldiers.<sup>4</sup> With less than the required number of

soldiers assigned to duty in Texas, military leaders had to protect and control over 263,000 square miles of U.S. territory. The area was overrun with white bandits, Mexican desperadoes, and rogue Indian tribes, who from their camps in Mexico repeatedly raided Texas ranches, stole cattle, and killed American citizens.<sup>5</sup> This map of Mexico depicts the Texas and Mexican border along which the Seminole Negro Indians scouted. Both Major-General H. W. Halleck, Commander of the Division of the South, and Colonel J. J. Reynolds, Commander of the Department of Texas, stated that more soldiers were required to keep the peace and that their men were being forced to do other duties, such as build roads and public buildings.<sup>6</sup> Relief for the commanders came with the provisions for the enlistment of Indian scouts in the Act of 1866. With the Indian scouts, field commanders now had the additional forces required to conduct trailing, reconnaissance, and raids against hostile forces in the West.



Figure 1. Map of the United Mexican States

In 1870, U.S. Army Captain Frank Perry traveled to Nacimientos, Mexico, and negotiated an agreement with John Kibbets, John Horse's successor, and the Seminole Negro Indians. In exchange for their scouting services, the Seminoles would receive military pay and Texas farmland. Over the next several years, small bands of Seminoles gradually joined the U.S. Army. For example, on 4 July 1870, Kibbets led a group of ten Seminoles to Fort Duncan, Texas. In the fall of 1871, Elijah Daniels and twenty more Seminoles joined the U.S. Army as scouts at Fort Clark, Texas, near Brackettsville.<sup>7</sup> In the Spring of 1873, twelve more Seminole Negro Indians crossed the Mexican border and enlisted into the United States Army at Fort Duncan. Throughout their years of service, the Seminole scouts lived in small villages primarily at Fort Duncan and then later at Fort Clark.

It was soon determined that a unique unit like the Seminole Negro Indian scouts, would require a special type of leader. For eight years Lieutenant John Lapham Bullis commanded the Seminole Negro Indian scout detachment. Bullis, a Quaker from New York, was assigned with the Seminole scouts in 1872 when he decided to marry a Mexican woman by the name of Juanita. All of these actions seemed to fit his slightly unorthodox nature. Bullis had quickly risen from private to captain while in the Union Army during the Civil War. As a leader, Bullis exhibited good health, stamina, courage, patience, and good judgment, all the traits necessary for a good scout commander. On 3 September 1867 Bullis was assigned to the Forty-first Infantry Regiment as a second lieutenant. On 11 November 1869 he was transferred to the Twenty-fourth Infantry Regiment which was commanded by Colonel Abner Doubleday.<sup>8</sup>

Both his superiors and the Seminole scouts respected and liked Bullis. Bullis was known to have taken a deep personal interest in the well-being and culture of his scouts. On several occasions he went to their homes to visit newborn babies and even performed a wedding ceremony for one scout and his bride.<sup>9</sup> Scout Joseph Phillip recalled that he was a good officer and a tough man who led by example.<sup>10</sup> From 1873 until 1881, Bullis was known for personally leading his men into combat on several occasions. One of the most memorable occurred on 17 May 1873 when Bullis led twenty Seminoles on a raid as part of a larger force that was being led by Colonel Ranald S. Mackenzie. The successful raid into Remolino, Mexico, was in response to a previous Indian raid into Texas that resulted in several civilians and an officer of the Ninth Cavalry being killed near Howard Wells, Texas.<sup>11</sup> Mackenzie would later go on to lead U.S. forces in the Spanish-American War in Cuba. In July of 1898 he would accept the surrender of Spanish forces in the town of Santiago, Cuba.

Like many other officers who participated in the Indian Wars, Bullis later served in Cuba and in the Philippines. For his many years of outstanding service to the United States and to the state of Texas, Bullis was recognized as "The friend of the Frontier" and presented with an engraved golden saber. In addition, in December 1917, Camp Bullis near San Antonio was named in his honor. Also, of the sixteen Indian scouts that received the Medal of Honor, four of the scouts served under Bullis. Major Zenas Bliss described the Seminole Negro Indian scouts as "Excellent hunters, trailers, brave and splendid fighters."<sup>12</sup> The Seminole Negro Indian scouts served with several units, including the

Fourth, Fifteenth, Twenty-fourth, and Twenty-fifth Infantry Regiments and the Sixth, Eighth, Ninth, and Tenth Cavalry Regiments.

### Early Employment

President Ulysses S. Grant, his Secretary of War, William W. Balknap and the Commander of the Department of Texas General Edward Otho Cresap Ord agreed that the Indian problem in the west must be resolved. During the Civil War in 1861, Ord, who was a proven military leader, commanded a brigade that was given the mission to defend Washington, D.C., and in October 1863 he commanded the XIII Artillery Corps in the Army of Tennessee in the Vicksburg Campaign.<sup>13</sup> These three men settled on a policy that would allow U.S. troops to search out and destroy bands of marauding Indians in the open and in the security of their base camps. The men chosen to lead the effort were Colonel Ranald S. Mackenzie and Colonel William R. Shafter. Mackenzie commanded extensively in the Civil War, including engineer, artillery, and cavalry units, and was wounded at the second battle of Bull Run.<sup>14</sup> Shafter was the commander of the Seventeenth Infantry Regiment in June 1864, and in 1869 assumed command of the Twenty-fourth Infantry Regiment and then the Fourth Cavalry Regiment.<sup>15</sup>

Mackenzie and Shafter found the idea of confronting the raiding Indians once they were in Texas as ineffective. A more permissive border policy would allow commanders to conduct limited forays into Mexico in search of Indians. While engaging and defeating the enemy was not a major problem, tracking and navigating in uncharted areas was. Scouting assistance came from the Seminole Negro Indians.

The Seminoles had the opportunity to prove their worth to the U.S. military by assisting on several combat missions designed to attack the base camps of several of the Indian tribes that were operating out of Mexico. On 18 May 1873, Bullis and the Seminole scouts led Mackenzie and four-hundred soldiers on a successful raid into Mexico that resulted in the destruction of Kickapoo, Lipan, and Mescalero villages. On 10 December 1873, Lieutenant Charles L. Hudson led six Seminoles and forty-one troopers of the Fourth Cavalry on a raid near Kickapoo Springs that resulted in nine Kiowa and Comanche warriors killed and eighty horses recaptured.<sup>16</sup>

#### Later Employment

Bullis led the Seminoles as part of several large-scale expeditions from 1875 until 1877. One memorable mission was led by Shafter in July 1876, when the Seminoles scouted for the Tenth, Twenty-fourth, and Twenty-fifth Cavalry Regiments against the Warm Springs Indians. The mission resulted in the destruction of their major base of operations near Sarogassa, Mexico.<sup>17</sup> During 1877, the Seminoles performed several more successful missions. During one mission they trailed a party of Apache Indians into Mexico, recovered nearly three-hundred head of cattle, and later crossed the Rio Grande River on rafts to surprise and destroy a second Apache camp.

In June of 1877, Bullis again led the Seminole scouts into Mexico in search of Kickapoo and Lipan Indians near the Santa Rosa Mountains. This search resulted in two more destroyed camps. In November of 1877, Bullis and a group of his scouts trailed and exchanged gunfire with a band of Mescalero Indians. Refusing to give up, the



scouts and some reinforcements eventually killed several of the warriors and their chief. In 1879, a troop of cavalrymen, Seminole scouts, and friendly Lipan Indians trailed a large band of Mescalero Indians for eighty days and nearly twelve hundred miles.<sup>18</sup>

In 1879 the Seminoles began one of their most significant missions. They were to track and help capture the Apache Chief Victorio. In May of 1880, the Seminoles attacked Victorio and flushed him out of hiding, where Major Albert Marrow of the U.S. Army just narrowly missed catching the chief as he was about to cross the border back into Mexico. Later that year, Colonel Benjamin Grierson's Tenth Cavalry and the Seminole scouts helped to finally trap Victorio. They blocked key mountain passes and guarded watering holes; as a result, Victorio was finally "captured and killed by Mexican Colonel Jaoquin Terrazas."<sup>19</sup> During one of the Seminole scouts' last battles in May of 1881, Bullis and thirty scouts trailed and defeated a band of Lipan Indians who had attacked and killed a Texas family one month earlier.

Besides their scouting mission, the Seminoles also performed a secondary mission for the U.S. Army. Ord was assigned the mission of not only protecting and controlling the western territory, he also had another critical mission, and that was to gather vital information about the land and any potential value that it might have. This specific task was subsequently given to Shafter. He was instructed to "Sweep the Staked Plains clear of all hostilities, and show in detail the resources of the country looking for its adaptability for cultivation and stock raising."<sup>20</sup> With the help of the Seminole Scouts, Shafter accomplished his mission.

### Performance

During their many years of scouting for the U.S. Army, the Seminole Negro Indians served with loyalty, honor, and valor. A testament to this fact is that Private Pompey Factor, Private Adam Paine, Trumpeter Issac Payne, and Sergeant John Ward, four Seminole Negro Indian scouts received the Congressional Medal of Honor. Three were cited for bravery when Bullis and the Seminoles fought against nearly twenty-five warriors along the Pecos River in 1875. On several occasions commanders praised the performance of the Seminole and other Indian scouts, and actually requested that more Indians be allowed to enlist in the army.<sup>21</sup> Colonel Edward Hatch, commander of the Ninth Cavalry Regiment stated that "The Seminoles were brave and daring, superior to the Indians of this region in fighting capabilities."<sup>22</sup>

Without a doubt, the conquest of the southwestern United States falls squarely on the shoulders of the dedicated officers and men of the U.S. Regular Army. However, the achievements of the Indian Scouts must also be taken into account. The constant attacks by the Seminoles brought many of the Indian raids to a halt and it also forced many of them to relocate further into Mexico, away from the Texas border.<sup>23</sup> The Seminoles' ability to track hostile Indians over old trails with minimal evidence was almost uncanny. The Seminole scouts enabled the U.S. Army to defeat hostile Indian groups on numerous occasions.

The [Seminole] scouts could follow a weeks-old trail across desert and mountains and could so locate and surround a hostile camp that the enemy could be overwhelmed by a surprise attack when it was feeling most secure.<sup>24</sup>

In 1876, the full potential of the Seminole scouts was realized when Ord allowed Shafter to cross the Mexican border in the pursuit of

hostile forces at his own discretion. During one mission across the border, while Shafter and his forces made camp, Bullis and his Seminoles began to scout the area for hostile Indians. On 30 July, when the scouts had tracked a band of Indians back to their village a troop from the Tenth Cavalry attacked the village and killed fourteen warriors and captured ninety horses. This was a clear indication of how extensively Seminole knowledge of the area was able to aid U.S. commanders.

The Seminole Indians contributed fully to the success of U.S. Army units in the desert southwest. The Seminoles served not only as scouts but also as combatants. They provided the commander timely intelligence and acted as light infantry and ranger type units when needed. Noted military historian Robert Utley writes about military operations in the frontier and the use of Indians as scouts in his book Frontier Regulars. He states that the Seminole Negroes "compiled a record that marked them as perhaps the most consistently effective Indian auxiliaries the army employed."<sup>25</sup>

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup>Jan Carew, "United We Stand!" Monthly Review, (August 1992): 122.

<sup>2</sup>Kenneth Porter, "The Seminole in Mexico, 1850-1861," The Hispanic American Historical Review 31 (February 1951): 4.

<sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*, 8.

<sup>4</sup>Emory Upton, The Military Policy of the United States (New York: Greenwood Press Publishers, 1904), 171.

<sup>5</sup>"Annual Report," Army and Navy Journal VIII, (3 December 1870): 3.

<sup>6</sup>"Department of Texas," Army and Navy Journal VIII, (3 December 1870): 4.

<sup>7</sup>Kenneth Porter, "The Seminole in Mexico," The Chronicles of Oklahoma, 29 (1951): 164.

<sup>8</sup>"Department of Texas," Army and Navy Journal VIII, (18 February 1871): 3.

<sup>9</sup>Kenneth Porter, The Negro on the American Frontier (New York: Arno Press and New York Times, 1971), 81.

<sup>10</sup>Edward Wallace, "Thunderbolt of The Texas Frontier, II," The Southwestern Historical Quarterly, 55 (July 1951): 81.

<sup>11</sup>*Ibid.*, 79.

<sup>12</sup>Kenneth Porter, "The Seminole Negro Indian Scouts," The Southwestern Historical Quarterly, 55 (August 1952): 362.

<sup>13</sup>Dumas Malone, ed. Dictionary of American Biography (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 14, 1934), 48.

<sup>14</sup>The National Cyclopaedia of American Biography (New York: James T. White and Company, 1907), 109.

<sup>15</sup>The National Cyclopaedia of American Biography (New York: James T. White and Company, 1907), 18.

<sup>16</sup>"Department of Texas," Army and Navy Journal XI, (10 January 1874): 3.

<sup>17</sup>Edward Wallace, "Thunderbolt of The Texas Frontier, II," The Southwestern Historical Quarterly 55 (July 1951): 82.

<sup>18</sup>*Ibid.*, 83.

<sup>19</sup>William Leckie, The Buffalo Soldiers (Norman: Oklahoma University Press, 1967), 228.

<sup>20</sup>*Ibid.*, 143.

<sup>21</sup>George Grinnell, Two Great Scouts and Their Pawnee Battalion (Cincinnati: The Arthur Clark Company, 1928), 95.

<sup>21</sup>"Department of Texas," Army and Navy Journal X, (21 June 1873): 4.

<sup>22</sup>Porter, "The Seminole Negro Indian Scouts," 368.

<sup>23</sup>"Department of Texas," Army and Navy Journal X, 4.

<sup>24</sup>Robert Utley, Frontier Regulars (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1973), 490.

<sup>25</sup>*Ibid.*, 355.

## CHAPTER 3

### THE MACABEBE SCOUTS

The Spanish-American War initially grew out of Cuba's struggle to end Spain's domination of the island nation. The United States became involved in the conflict through an effort to protect and support U.S. and Cuban economic and humanitarian concerns.<sup>1</sup> On 15 February 1898 the battleship Maine was sunk in Havana port and 260 American sailors were killed. The battleship had been dispatched to evacuate U.S. citizens from Cuba.<sup>2</sup> In April, President William McKinley called for the withdrawal of Spain from Cuba. In response to U.S. demands Spain declared war on the United States on 24 April. On 1 May 1898 the United States became fully immersed in the affairs of Spain in the Philippine Islands when the United States Navy confronted the Spanish fleet. In the South China Sea, off the coast of the Philippines, U.S. Navy Commodore George Dewey maneuvered his ships and quickly destroyed the Spanish fleet in Manila Bay. Meanwhile, in Cuba, in July 1898, Spanish troops surrendered to General William Shafter and by December Spain and the U.S. would be at peace. In becoming a major military and economic power, the U.S. now had a base of operations in Asia. Now came the delicate task of establishing a U.S. land presence in the Philippines. Major General Wesley Merritt was the first American commander to arrive in the Philippines after Dewey's success. Merritt led over eight-thousand U.S. troops ashore. Although the idea of employing indigenous

auxiliary and irregular troops in combat was still relatively unique to American leaders in 1898, the idea was not new to U.S. military leaders, other countries would not have even considered approaching the Philippine Insurrection of 1898 in any other fashion. In fact, in a London paper, in April 1899, an English Army officer actually criticized U.S. actions in the Philippine Islands. He chided the U.S. for "not raising local troops and setting one tribe against another."<sup>3</sup> This method of divide and conquer was used by the British in India and their other colonies around the globe from the seventeenth through the nineteenth centuries.

American commanders, sought ways to augment their units' capabilities with the employment of Filipinos. In fact, before arriving in the Philippines, General Henry W. Lawton utilized the expertise of Indian scouts during the Indian Wars in the southwestern United States.

Upon their arrival in the Philippines, the U.S. military leaders, employed American units to serve as scouts. These troops were faced with severe difficulties in the Philippines. The extremely rugged terrain, unrelenting wet environment, malaria, cholera, dengue fever, oppressive heat, and multiple dialects all combined to create major obstacles to U.S. operations. In particular, it hampered intelligence-gathering capabilities. The scouts often operated well to the front and flanks of the main body, providing the commander security and early warning. Initially, W. H. Young, a civilian employee of the army, served as the chief of U.S. scouts for Lawton. Although the scouts did well, their performance declined after the death of Young on 16 May 1899. Recalling his experiences in the Indian Wars, Lawton knew that he needed capable scouts.<sup>4</sup> These new troops would have to conduct

high-risk operations, such as gathering intelligence behind enemy lines and fighting numerically superior forces.



Figure 2. Map of The Republic of the Philippines

Lawton's answer appeared to lie with a group of people known as the Macabebe tribe. In 1896, the Macabebe tribe had fought on the side of the Spanish against the Tagalog tribe and other rebels. Most native tribes saw the Macabebes' act as a sign of disloyalty towards the native peoples, and the Tagalogs and other tribes intensely disliked the Macabebes. The Filipinos viewed Spain as having been an unfair ruler from 1565 until 1898.<sup>5</sup> The Spanish had dominated the economy, religion, and education of the Philippine Islands, for nearly three hundred years.



Filipino doctor and writer Jose Rizal is credited with sowing the initial seeds of discontent with Spain among the Filipino people. He wrote the books The Lost Eden and The Subversive which attacked Spanish control of the Philippines. Rizal was later raised to the level of a martyr when he was tried and executed for protesting Spain's rule of the Philippines.

Although the Filipinos had hoped for independence after the end of Spanish rule, the islands fell, instead, under the control of the United States. Before American forces arrived in the Philippines, Filipino leader Emilio Aguinaldo and the Spanish governor of the Philippines signed the Treaty of Biac-na-bato. Which stated among other things that if the leaders of the insurgency left the islands complete social reforms would take place within three years. The U.S. acquired control of the Philippines, Guam, and Puerto Rico through the Treaty of Paris which was signed with Spain on 10 December 1898. During the actual transfer of power from Spanish military leaders to American military leaders in the city of Intramuros, the insurgent leaders, who had resisted foreign domination, were completely left out of the negotiations. Emilio Aguinaldo, leader of the insurgents, was even denied entry into Manila, despite the fact that the United States had earlier assisted Aguinaldo in his return to the Philippines from exile. The Filipino people now had a new overseer--the United States.

On 21 December 1898, President William McKinley proclaimed that the U.S. would deal fairly with the Filipino people. The U.S. would use the mild sway of justice and benevolent assimilation as the basis for policy in dealing with the Philippine Islands.<sup>6</sup> However, Aguinaldo condemned America's violent and aggressive seizure of his homeland, and

on 4 February 1899 fighting began between U.S. soldiers and Aguinaldo's rebels.<sup>7</sup> Outwardly upset with American domination, on 23 January 1899, Aguinaldo and his followers established a provisional Filipino government in Malolos, Luzon. While U.S. units controlled Manila and portions of Luzon, the insurrectionists dominated the countryside with their hit-and-run guerrilla tactics. Aguinaldo planned to defeat the Americans through subordinate leaders who were to be placed in a series of districts that were spread around the island. He also planned to employ both guerrillas and Tagalog revolutionaries as combat troops.

#### Formation

First Lieutenant M. A. Batson, a young officer assigned to the Fourth Cavalry, is given credit for training and leading the first Filipino Irregulars.<sup>8</sup> Both his peers and superiors, viewed Batson as an outstanding officer. For service with the Fourth Cavalry Regiment on 6 July 1898 and under the command of General Lawton, he was awarded the Medal of Honor. However, Lawton is remembered for having the idea of forming and employing indigenous Filipinos during the Philippine Insurrection.<sup>9</sup> Batson was able to discover that the Macabebes had extensive knowledge of the land and the other native tribes. He also learned that the Macabebes had earlier served with the Spanish and would now be willing to aid the Americans. Lawton understood the importance of gaining the assistance of the native people and realized that the indigenous people would be able to provide the U.S. Army with additional scouting, reconnaissance, and combat capabilities. In addition, while scouting, the natives were able to detect subtle differences in the land, people and tactics, that might escape an American scout. The

ability to track and find rebel soldiers became more significant as the insurrection continued.

When Aguinaldo's best commander General Luna was killed in June 1899, Aguinaldo discontinued the traditional tactics and organization of a regular army, and began to fight only a guerrilla war. He also managed his forces through a series of guerrilla districts. After conducting an attack, the rebels were able to blend into the surrounding barrio population without being discovered.

The Americans realized that the solution for finding the Filipino rebels in the barrios rested in methods once used by General George Crook, a highly successful commander during the Indian wars. He believed that the U.S. Army had to "use Indians to catch Indians."<sup>10</sup> In this instance, it meant using Filipinos to catch Filipinos. Neither General Arthur MacArthur, father of Douglas MacArthur, nor General Ewell S. Otis was anxious to embrace the idea of employing the Macabebe tribesmen as scouts for the U.S. Army. This was probably because of their basic distrust and lack of knowledge of the Filipino people. However, Lawton, who had served with Crook during the Indian Wars, entertained the idea of employing indigenous people as auxiliary and irregular troops.<sup>11</sup>

Despite some initial resistance, Batson pursued Lawton's idea about using native people as scouts for the army. In 1899, he finally convinced Otis to employ the Macabebe tribesmen as scouts and in August of 1899, as an experiment, Otis allowed Batson to initially train and lead one hundred Macabebe tribesmen to serve as scouts for the United States Army. A typical Macabebe company was composed of one captain, one lieutenant, one first sergeant, one quartermaster sergeant, six

sergeants, eight corporals, and ninety-two privates.<sup>12</sup> Eventually, Batson was to train nearly five hundred Macabebe scouts, almost all from the central province of Pampanga. Also, the Macabebes, like other natives, were especially well suited to operate in the mountains and jungles of the central and northern Luzon region. The indigenous scouts were able to survive with minimal supplies and rations, and they were able to transit the jungle quickly by using their sharp bolo knives to cut trails and their narrow boats, known as bancas, to navigate the many streams and rivers.

#### Early Employment

In September 1899, Batson's scouts were tested in combat. During their first engagement, near the town of Arayat, they fought successfully, although their daring charge also resulted in their first casualties.<sup>13</sup> Batson was then ordered to train 250 more scouts. The commanders for these two additional companies were Lieutenant D. P. Quinlan, Eleventh Cavalry, and Lieutenant Henry Boutelle, Third Artillery Regiment.<sup>14</sup> In October, the Macabebes attempted to get involved in their second battle, but failed because of rugged terrain. However, they successfully gained the respect, trust, and confidence of the U.S. military leaders. Convinced of their value on the battlefield, MacArthur requested that a company of the Macabebe scouts also be attached to his headquarters. Otis, likewise, received two companies of the scouts.<sup>15</sup>

In October of 1899, the Macabebes were assigned the mission of guarding and protecting the supply trains of Brigadier General Samuel B. M. Young's provisional cavalry brigade.<sup>16</sup> On the 19th of October,

Batson's scouts successfully screened the main body of General Young's brigade as it moved northward toward another engagement against the revolutionaries. The American brigade used this series of maneuvers to move from San Fernando to Cabanatuan. As Young's brigade pushed northward, the rebels chose only to delay rather than present a strong defense to the attackers.<sup>17</sup>

Obviously pleased with their performance, Young ordered Batson to recruit and train two companies of Macabebe scouts for his brigade. Taking the initiative, Batson returned with not two but four companies of scouts.<sup>18</sup> Almost immediately upon their arrival, the native scouts proved themselves of value. On the 31 October 1899, while Young's brigade executed the main attack on the town of Aliago, the Macabebes conducted a successful supporting attack against a rebel unit.<sup>19</sup> For the first time, American forces had substantial success outside of Manila and in the Luzon province.

On 3 November 1899, Batson's Macabebe scouts conducted two operations against rebel forces. First, the scouts spoiled an ambush of approximately two hundred Filipino rebels directed against the cavalry brigade. The scouts successfully evaded a second bolo knife attack, and later that month, Batson's scouts were requested to serve as an advance guard. His unit was to screen the movement of U.S. troops from Cabanatuan to San Fabian, where they would prepare for future operations against the rebels. On 11 November 1899, after a long pursuit, the Macabebes were able to capture a small group of revolutionaries.<sup>20</sup> Along the way, the scouts were credited with capturing the personal effects belonging to a Philippine general officer. Among the items seized were the plans and orders from Aguinaldo to evacuate all rebel

units through the San Nicolas Pass. Also, a dispatch pouch that contained significant information about the rebel insurrection. It provided the American military with critical information about Aguinaldo's forces and the names of Aguinaldo's top leaders. In addition, Aguinaldo's headquarters and stronghold in Palanan was uncovered.<sup>21</sup> Finally, General Funston's staff was able to break the encryption system that was used by the rebels to send messages.

#### Later Employment

To prepare for the final capture of Emilio Aguinaldo, General Frederick Funston and his staff devised a daring and aggressive plan of attack. His plan was considered so risky and dangerous that General MacArthur stated to Funston, "I fear I shall never see you again."<sup>22</sup> The plan would require the combined efforts of American officers, Macabebe scouts, former rebels, and a Spanish officer. As part of his plan, Funston required the use of five American officers who were to serve as fake prisoners. For the prisoners, he chose Lieutenant Burton Mitchell, Captain Harry Newton, Captain Russell Hazzard, Captain Oliver Hazzard, and Funston himself.<sup>23</sup> In addition, a Macabebe scout detachment led by veteran soldier, First Sergeant Pedro Butro, was disguised to look like Tagalog rebels. The scout detachment was chosen from Company D, First Battalion. Former rebel Hilario Talplacido supplied critical information about Aguinaldo's operations. Lazaro Segovia, a Spanish intelligence officer, also assisted Funston by breaking the rebel encoding system. Segovia had remained in the Philippines after the Spanish withdrew and now aided the Americans.

On 8 March 1901 the detachment began their mission and sailed from Manila aboard the gunboat Vicksburg. The eighty-eight man team landed at Casiguran Sound and began their ninety-mile march to the village of Palanan on 17 March.<sup>24</sup> The expedition traveled for nine days through difficult terrain. When the force approached rebel camp, the rebels allowed the American and Macabebe detachment to enter their camp unchallenged. The rebels mistakenly believed that the American and Macabebe unit were fellow rebels. As planned, on 23 March 1901, Funston's detachment marched into Aguinaldo's headquarters and stated, "You are our prisoner. Surrender or be killed!"<sup>25</sup> The reserve forces entered the village unmolested and completed the capture of the insurgent leader.

#### Performance

The combat performance of the Macabebe scouts during the Philippine insurrection was deemed outstanding by the senior U.S. Army leadership.<sup>26</sup> During their employment by the U.S. Army, the Macabebe scouts were allowed to wear the U.S. Army campaign hat. This inexpensive item was highly treasured by the Macabebes. They were also issued the highly effective Krag-Jorgenson carbine rifle. After reviewing the formation and utilization of the Macabebes as a military unit, it must be noted that although they were called "scouts," these indigenous soldiers actually served as light infantry troops. Their employment by the U.S. military was more infantry than scouting in nature. The Macabebes were repeatedly recognized not only for finding, but also attacking and destroying enemy locations. On several occasions, the Macabebes would fix the enemy while the main body

maneuvered to a vantage point. They were also very capable of identifying rebels even though they attempted to blend into the local village. American commanders greatly appreciated this capability.

Throughout the insurrection, the Macabebes were able to augment the efforts of the American forces. The scouts were responsible for maintaining pressure on the rebels throughout some of the most difficult terrain on the island. Batson's scouts were not as greatly affected by the hot, humid climate and numerous diseases as were the American soldiers. Furthermore, the Macabebes were highly successful in tracking the rebels through the dense jungles.

Lastly, the innovative Funston and the dedicated Macabebes scouts made for an outstanding combination, producing the near bloodless capture of the rebel leader Emilio Aguinaldo. Although some resistance continued until 1903, Aguinaldo and most Filipinos finally agreed on a peaceful coexistence with the United States.

With the insurrection under control the U.S. government began to transition to the post conflict environment. By 1900 the United States Army had organized almost 5,000 Filipinos into military units, officially called Philippine Native Scouts.<sup>27</sup> Appropriately, Batson was assigned as a major in the first squadron of scouts where the Macabebes were transformed from raw scouts into disciplined soldiers. In 1901 the U.S. Congress allowed Filipinos to enlist in the United States Regular Army. This action appeared to be a proper testament to the Herculean efforts of Batson's Macabebe scouts. President William McKinley appointed William Howard Taft, who would later himself become president of the United States, as the first civil governor of the Philippines.



Taft was noted for doing an outstanding job restoring the Filipino government and social services.

### Endnotes

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<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 320.

<sup>3</sup>Stuart C. Miller, Benevolent Assimilation (Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1982), 81.

<sup>4</sup>Congress, War Department, Annual Report of Chiefs of Bureaus 30 June 1900, pt. 2: 209.

<sup>5</sup>Frederica M. Bunge, Philippines a Country Study (Washington: Department of the Army, 1984), 3.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., 25.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid.

<sup>9</sup>"Macabebe Battalion," Army and Navy Journal X (7 April 1900): 745.

<sup>9</sup>War Report, part 2, 219.

<sup>10</sup>Miller op. Cit., 81.

<sup>11</sup>War Report part 2, 209.

<sup>12</sup>Army and Navy Journal X, (7 April 1900): 745.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid.

<sup>15</sup>John Gates, Schools and Krags (Connecticut: Greenwood Press, Inc, 1973), 40.

<sup>16</sup>Congress, War Department, Annual Report of Chiefs of Bureaus 30 June 1900, pt. 4: 11.

<sup>17</sup>War Report, pt. 2, 211.

<sup>18</sup>War Report, pt. 4, 11.

<sup>19</sup>War Report, pt. 2, 219.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., 232.

<sup>21</sup>Army and Navy Journal, XIII (30 March 1901): 3.

<sup>22</sup>David H. Bain, Sitting in Darkness: Americans in the Philippines (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1984), 210.

<sup>23</sup>"Mail From The Philippines," Army and Navy Journal XII (14 January 1901): 742.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid., 366.

<sup>26</sup>War Report pt. 2, 266.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid.

## CHAPTER 4

### VIETNAMESE IRREGULAR DEFENSE GROUP

In 1960 the United States would again maximize the capabilities of indigenous irregular forces in the jungles of Vietnam just as it had done in the Philippine Islands years earlier. Colonel Edward G. Lansdale and Colonel Gilbert B. Layton were two of the many figures involved with the development and employment of Vietnamese indigenous programs. The early work done by Lansdale led directly to the creation of the Civilian Irregular Defense Group (CIDG). From 1950 until 1953 before arriving in Vietnam, Lansdale had worked successfully with the Filipino Government to defeat the Communists Hukbong Bayan Laban Sa Hapon guerrillas in the Philippine Islands. The full name which meant The People's Army Against Japan, was later shortened to Hukbalahap or Huk.<sup>1</sup> Lansdale interacted closely with the indigenous people and was able to gain their confidence and gather a great deal of intelligence. He hoped to achieve the same results in Vietnam.<sup>2</sup> Lansdale served as an advisor to Filipino Secretary of Defense and later President Ramon Magsaysay. Lansdale worked out of the Civil Affairs Office which was responsible for using the military to positively influence the local population.<sup>3</sup> This was accomplished by providing food, services and supplies to those civilians in need through the military. Before his death in 1953, Magsaysay reorganized and increased the army and civil police in order to defeat the Huks guerrillas.

Before discussing American involvement in Vietnam and the use of indigenous forces, it is necessary to briefly review the actions of the French military while in Indochina and, in particular, in Vietnam. In 1945 when Japan surrendered after World War II, Vietnam which had been seized by Japan declared its independence. However, the French did not want to relinquish its protectorate control of Indochina and attempted to continue to dominate the country. The guerrilla war that ensued was as a result of Viet Minh resistance. The first Vietnam War was based on two distinct philosophies of mobility. The North Vietnamese philosophy was based on mobility of the individual soldier; the French focused on the mobility of large professional armies.<sup>4</sup> This caused the French to follow the principles of conventional warfare in the jungles of Vietnam. The Viet Minh and the North Vietnamese Army (NVA), were conducting extensive guerrilla warfare against the Westerners thus maximizing limited personnel and resources. The full name of the Viet Minh is Viet Nam Doc Lap Minh, which when translated means League for the Independence of Vietnam.

French military leaders later realized two important aspects of fighting in Vietnam. The first was to include the Vietnamese in their combat operations, and the second was to form and employ their own brand of auxiliary and irregular forces. The soldier chosen to organize, train and lead the irregular troops in Vietnam was Major Roger Trinquier. Trinquier learned about the importance of using indigenous irregulars in combat as a lieutenant when he was assigned to command an outpost along the Sino-Tonkinese border in 1936 to interdict pirates and opium smugglers.<sup>5</sup> In Vietnam he believed that to ultimately win a conflict against the Viet Minh, the war must be carried to the enemy.<sup>6</sup>

This entailed destroying the enemies logistical support, bases of operations, and gaining detailed intelligence. In 1950, the French finally developed two units to oppose the guerrilla threat of the Viet Minh. In 1951, Trinquier was in command of the two units known as the Commando Groups and the Airborne Commando Groups.<sup>7</sup> The Commando Groups were special strike forces that were designed to work with conventional French units. Trinquier also traveled to American run anti-guerrilla camps in Korea and Japan where he demonstrated his training techniques. The Commando Groups had indigenous officers and French noncommissioned officers. The mission of the Commando Groups was to seek out enemy units for destruction by larger conventional units. The Airborne Commando Groups were organized to parachute behind enemy lines and disrupt Viet Minh and NVA logistical operations and to gather intelligence. Both the Commando Groups and the Airborne Commando Groups were structured to report directly to the French Intelligence Agency. Trinquier believed that much of the most important intelligence about the enemy and the area of operations would come from the local inhabitants.<sup>8</sup> It was estimated that by 1953, Trinquier controlled nearly 20,000 indigenous soldiers. This technique of reporting directly to a nonmilitary intelligence agency was later repeated by the United States, through the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), from 1960 until 1963. In 1963 the U.S. Army would take charge of all the indigenous forces.

Leaders of the French Army clearly understood the merits of employing indigenous troops in Vietnam. Even the combat-proven French Foreign Legion maintained a battalion of Indochinese scouts to guide them on missions whenever they were forced to enter unfamiliar country.

Trinquier clearly understood the importance of correctly identifying the adversary. He realized that unlike World Wars I and II, the enemy in modern warfare would not simply be arrayed on the other side of the Rhine River or accross the Channel with clear national aims and military objectives.<sup>9</sup> Also, guerrillas, like the Viet Minh, did not consists of a few soldiers, but of an entire network of civilian support. Trinquier believed that to defeat the Viet Minh, two things had to occur. First, the enemy force had to be infiltrated so that accurate and detailed information could be gathered and passed back to his conventional forces.<sup>10</sup> Second, long-term area policing had to take place in order to fully suppress the enemy guerrillas and deny him the use of a geographical area.<sup>11</sup> Although tactically effective, French counter guerrilla forces appeared to be too little, too late to have any strategic impact. The final blow came on 7 May 1954 when General Vo Nguyen Giap's Viet Minh forces captured the French units garrisoned at Dien Bien Phu. This garrison of 15,000 French soldiers had been established in the highlands of northwestern Vietnam along with several other outposts to allow the French to strike deep into Viet Minh territory.

Giap, who had been trained by Mao Tse-tung's military, employed both conventional and unconventional forces to secure his victory against the French. This was accomplished even though French intelligence reports had confirmed the approach of the Viet Minh forces and the enemy's stockpiling of artillery and ammunition. The French defeat at Dien Bien Phu effectively ended the first Vietnam War. Giap would later become an aide to Ho Chi Minh and plan the 1968 Tet offensive.

In 1954, United States Air Force Colonel Edward G. Lansdale went to Vietnam to try to recreate the success he had in the Philippines. Lansdale, would work for Ambassador Donald Heath, and Military Assistance Advisor Group (MAAG) commander, General John W. O'Daniel. President Harry Truman, established the MAAG, to counteract the efforts of Ho Chi Minh's military advances toward other Asian countries.<sup>12</sup>

Lansdale surmised that the ultimate recovery for Vietnam lay in the hands of the indigenous people. As the Chief of the CIA's Saigon Military Mission, Lansdale focused on helping Vietnam create paramilitary units and to direct psychological operations against the Viet Minh.<sup>13</sup> Secretary of State John Foster Dulles wanted to use the withdrawal of the French forces to provide assistance directly to Vietnam.<sup>14</sup> To be successful, Lansdale, would have to call upon his experience in the Philippines.

Lansdale encountered French influence throughout Vietnam as one minor obstacle to achieving success. French officials, were spread throughout the Vietnamese government, in several key leadership positions, and although the French had agreed to the Geneva Accords in July 1954, French influence in Vietnam was still evident.

The Geneva Accords contained three major issues: (1) A temporary partition of Vietnam was set along the 17th Parallel; (2) the partition and nationwide elections were to take place in 1956; and (3) neither the French nor Ho Chi Minh would be allowed military bases or alliances in Vietnam. After the Accords, 90,000 Viet Minh migrated north and 650,000 Catholics headed south. President Dwight D. Eisenhower, would later rely on the MAAG and unconventional forces as a



way of helping Vietnam without involving a large number of American troops.

Initially, Lansdale worked in the G-5 section of the Vietnamese Army. His major contribution was the development of a psychological warfare campaign. This was drawn from lessons that he learned while in the Philippines. Lansdale knew that getting information to the Vietnamese people would be key to stripping support from the Communist Viet Minh. Lansdale used his early days in Saigon to become acquainted with the history of Vietnam, the many religious sects and ethnic groups, the guerrilla war of the Lien-Minh, and the new Prime Minister, Ngo dinh Diem.<sup>15</sup>

The Lien-Minh, led by Trinh Minh Thé, controlled territory along the Cambodian border and fought against both the French and the communists. Lansdale's first major undertaking was to send six of his team members, led by Major Lucien Conein, to northern Vietnam to observe the refugee movement during the withdrawal of the Viet Minh. Lansdale also became familiar with Trinh Minh Thé, leader of the Lien-Minh, and their guerrilla war for independence. He found that Thé was a capable leader. Thé was aware of the Huk campaign in the Philippines, admired Diem, and desired that Vietnam have a single army. After much discussion, the Lien-Minh joined the national army in February 1955.

Eventually Lansdale became head of the American and French Training Relations and Instruction Mission (TRIM). This mission was organized to coordinate the efforts of the Vietnamese military in the reoccupation zones as the Viet Minh withdrew. As part of the Geneva Accords the control of Vietnam's government and banking institutions were to transfer from French to the Vietnamese, by January 1955.<sup>16</sup>

Through TRIM, Lansdale convinced Diem to create a more professional army. He stressed that it was also important that the soldiers be sensitive to the needs of the people. Lansdale, hoped that this would win widespread support for Diem's cause and facilitate the defeat of the Viet Minh. More important, Lansdale envisioned a national army composed of small, mobile units trained in anti-guerrilla tactics.<sup>17</sup> In the summer of 1955, Lansdale moved from TRIM to MAAG, where he created a unit to train the Vietnamese in unconventional warfare.

During political unrest in Laos in 1954, the NVA were able to seize control of a portion of Laos near the Vietnam border. To counter this threat and to maintain a buffer between Thailand and North Vietnam, the CIA set up the Program Evaluation Office (PEO) to conduct covert operations. Meo tribesmen were trained as guerrilla fighters by retired U.S. officers and civilians. The tribesmen were then formed into small teams, and in 1961, the PEO was replaced by the MAAG.<sup>18</sup>

In 1959 in Laos, Lieutenant Colonel Arthur Simons headed the early White Star teams, which were designed to hamper the efforts of NVA units through various methods of sabotage. This included the destruction of major equipment and the capture of key leaders. These irregular tactics were seen as necessary to defeat the NVA and Viet Cong.

#### Formation

In 1961, Lansdale, now a brigadier general, stated that Vietnam's survival required unconventional strategies and tactics to beat the Viet Cong at their own game. President John F. Kennedy directed the CIA to prepare for covert guerrilla operations in North

Vietnam. He also supported a major expansion of U.S. unconventional warfare assets. In response to French withdrawal, Kennedy ordered the White Star teams to wear their regular uniforms and to no longer use the PEO as a cover for their operations.

In 1955, Lansdale had activated two of his initial ten-man teams (called "Binh" and "Hao") who were to serve as "stay-behind" troops and conduct sabotage operations against key enemy targets. The teams had been trained easier in secret Filipino-backed camps. In addition, they were financed by the CIA and even had access to aircraft through the covert organization known as the Civil Air Transportation. To blunt a military strike by the north, the Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) was formed. Although this was a conventional army, the CIA created several second generation "Binh" units to serve as unconventional troops.

Nationwide elections that were planned for Vietnam in 1956, were not held because of the refusal of the Government of Vietnam and the United States to agree to them. It was realized that Ho Chi Minh could easily win an election against Diem.

To stem the flow of North Vietnamese Army (NVA) units along the Laotian border, the CIA and the French again formed local people into bands of guerrilla fighters aimed at defeating the NVA. Later a second attempt was made to consolidate and coordinate American and French operations in Vietnam.<sup>19</sup> In 1959, under the covert Program Evaluation Office, Simons organized "over nine thousand indigenous irregulars."<sup>20</sup> By training the local people to defend themselves, the U.S. military hoped to deny the NVA much needed supplies, food, and recruits in the outlying regions.

After assuming control of the Vietnam situation, during the fall of 1961, the U.S. military gained some unity of effort in the war by employing several Vietnamese subgroups in the defense of Vietnam. The organization was known as the Civilian Irregular Defense Group (CIDG). The CIDG program was at the center of American Special Forces efforts in Vietnam. It was designed to incorporate local villagers in the fight against the NVA and the Viet Cong. The CIDG was conceived by Colonel Gilbert Layton while serving as Chief of the Combined Studies Division of the MAAG.

The Montagnard tribal group known as the Rhade were chosen by the CIA and the GVN as the initial CIDG. The Rhade tribe lived in the Central Highlands in the Darlac Province of Vietnam and were considered to be a highly intelligent and advanced group of people.

The CIDG was to become the largest, most innovative, and most effective unconventional warfare program in Vietnam.<sup>21</sup> This map of Vietnam shows the border of Laos and Vietnam where the CIDG patrolled. It consisted of tribal people from the mostly rural Vietnam countryside who were trained to protect and defend their immediate territory. By 1963, the CIDG consisted of nearly twelve thousand troops spread over two hundred villages in the central part of the country. The program was later instituted among other tribes in Vietnam. In 1964, the program grew to seventy-five thousand troops.

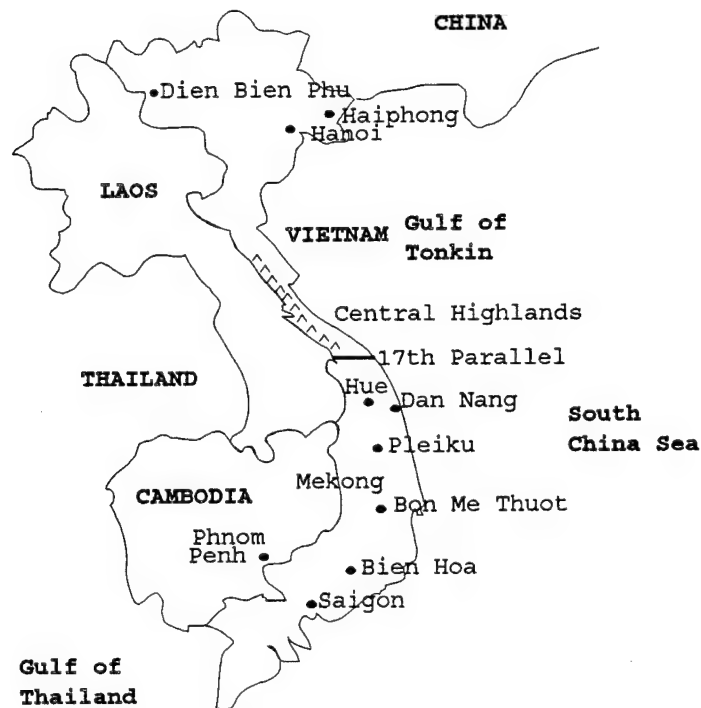


Figure 3. Map of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam

United States Special Forces teams also found themselves interacting with ethnic and religious minority groups of South Vietnam. This was due to the fact that Special Forces teams usually set up their base camps in the same remote areas where many of the minority groups established their villages. Once a secure base camp was set up near a village, the Special Forces could begin guerrilla training and then expand to nearby hamlets.<sup>22</sup> By spreading out across Vietnam and working with different groups, the Special Forces could help unite the people of South Vietnam in a common effort.

In 1963, a major change took place in the administration and execution of auxiliary and irregular programs and forces in Vietnam. The U.S. government implemented Operation Switchback. During this

operation, the control of all CIA auxiliary personnel projects in Vietnam were turned over to Special Forces units. Layton oversaw this operation from his position as Chief of the CIA Combined Studies Division. The major tasks taken over by the Special Forces included special units and clandestine and paramilitary programs. This meant that the fifty-five hundred members of the Combat Intelligence Teams, Border Surveillance, and Mountain scouts were now absorbed into the CIDG.

### Early Employment

In 1961, the United States Army, Navy, and Air Force all began to expand or form their own special operations forces (SOF). The U. S. Navy Seals were developed for counterinsurgency missions. The Air Force's Air Commandos were formed to teach indigenous people how to conduct interdiction, aerial reconnaissance, and ground support missions. The U.S. Army established twelve-man teams designed to train indigenous people in unconventional ground warfare.

Over time, Special Forces teams began to train and work more closely with CIDG forces. While the majority of the village defenders in the CIDG were not paid, there was a small full time "strike force" that did receive payment for their services.<sup>23</sup> This strike force, which was the core element of the CIDG, was used to gather intelligence, conduct reconnaissance, and execute ambushes. Initially, strike force personnel worked within their local areas. They were later consolidated and used throughout the country.

The larger unpaid force was used to build and man defenses primarily around their own villages. The Rhade tribe was a prime

example of how people were used to defend their own village. By August 1961, over 10,000 Rhade villagers were members of the CIDG. Some of the officers credited with the program's early success are Colonel George C. Morton, Chief of Special Warfare, Military Assistance Command Vietnam, and detachment commanders Captain Terry D. Cordell and Captain Ronald A. Schackleton.<sup>24</sup>

Although both the CIA and Special Forces Groups wanted to achieve success in Vietnam, they had slightly different ways of approaching the problem. This difference was clearly demonstrated in the utilization of the CIDG forces. While the CIA used the CIDG mainly as defensive forces to protect the hamlets and to gather information, Special Forces teams were committed to a more offensive role. As the war effort gained momentum, the passive attitude of the defensive was less effective. The CIDG evolved away from strictly defensive operations toward more aggressive, hit-and-run, commando raids along the Vietnam-Cambodian-Laos border. The CIDG began to actively seek out and destroy both Viet Cong and North Vietnamese Army (NVA) units as the war evolved. In addition, President Diem also wanted the CIDG to perform civic missions, such as building roads and schools.

#### Later Employment

Although the CIDG were supposed to gather intelligence and defend themselves, they at times, they aggressively sought the enemy by attacking the Viet Cong and NVA close to their bases of operations. This served to create a feeling of insecurity among the Viet Cong and NVA and made a significant psychological impact on Viet Cong and NVA soldiers.

As the American buildup continued, several Special Forces security zones were turned over to conventional units. This allowed the CIDG and the Special Forces to concentrate on more offensive tactics. On 20 March 1966, a CIDG detachment assaulted a Viet Cong stronghold. On 21 March, three CIDG detachments, engaged and destroyed a Viet Cong company. Finally, on 30 March, two Special Forces led CIDG companies ambushed the lead company of a Viet Cong battalion.<sup>25</sup> These missions, and many others, proved the resolve of the indigenous forces in combat. These missions, were also indicative of the useful employment of the CIDG. The Special Forces teams organized the CIDG into standardized military organizations, such as companies and battalions. This was done to facilitate training and combat operations.

Due to instability of the government after the death of Diem, increased emphasis was placed on protecting Vietnam's borders. The strike force elements of the CIDG were relocated and began to focus their efforts along the borders of Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia. General Paul D. Harkins of MACV, gave Special Forces leaders five specific missions. The first mission was to recruit and train personnel to guard the borders; second, Special Forces units were to establish intelligence networks; third, they were to gain the loyalty of the population; fourth, they were to gain control of the border region and deny penetrations by the Viet Cong; and fifth, they were to use long-range patrols to conduct guerrilla warfare against the Viet Cong and the NVA.<sup>26</sup> Although the border camps and outposts never really closed the border entirely, it did impede Viet Cong to some degree.

Besides being hampered by the huge task of guarding the border, the CIDG also suffered from poor morale because they were forced to



relocate. Cross-border operations were overseen by Simons of the Studies and Observation Group Ground Studies Division. Simons was viewed as the special type of soldier needed to lead these missions. He was a World War II ranger and a specialist in jungle warfare.

The Fifth Special Forces Group utilized the CIDG in a unique and innovative way. They were to conduct long-range reconnaissance patrols (LRRP), operating away from their parent units for extended periods of time. Furthermore, these indigenous troops would now infiltrate the base camps of the NVA and gather critical information. These patrols were designed to gather intelligence deep within enemy territory to the north or across the border in to Laos or Cambodia.

#### Performance

On balance, the CIDG program did accomplish its original objective of denying large portions of the uncommitted population, supplies, and land to the Viet Cong.<sup>27</sup> The results of using South Vietnamese auxiliary and irregular units like the CIDG were quite positive. For example, when a village was defended by civilian irregulars, the Viet Cong would usually not attack for fear of sustaining casualties. Instead, they would assault undefended hamlets. The CIDG also interdicted the lines of communication and supply of the Viet Cong by occupying strategic outposts along the border.

Key leaders such as Lansdale are credited with laying the groundwork for the CIDG through the TRIM program. This program focused on ensuring that the people of Vietnam would guide their own destiny by taking part in the defense of their country. Employing the CIDG allowed

the CIA, and later the Special Forces, to concentrate on using Army of the Republic of Vietnam Regulars against NVA regulars.

In 1966, the United States began to send an increasing number of regular combat troops to Vietnam. Although some critics thought that this would mean the end of all indigenous auxiliary and irregular troops in Vietnam, this was not the case. Eventually, the irregulars proved invaluable in support of U.S. forces and Military Assistance Command Vietnam (MACV) special intelligence needs.<sup>28</sup>

The CIDG began to work even more closely with the Fifth Special Forces Group (SFG) and, eventually, the CIDG served as a key portion of the SFG as they searched and destroyed Viet Cong and NVA units throughout Vietnam. By becoming more aggressive and pressing the war to the enemy, the CIDG caused the Viet Cong and NVA to become increasingly suspicious of their surroundings and environment. They began to wonder whether or not the trail ahead was safe, or if their equipment and ammunition was booby trapped, or if the soldier to their right or left was a member of ARVN or some South Vietnamese irregular unit.

The CIDG also provided significant amounts of intelligence to U.S. military leaders. In addition, this grass-roots program served to instill some degree of unity in the hundreds of diverse ethnic and religious minority groups in Vietnam.

After the Special Forces Group left Vietnam in 1971, the Government of Vietnam began to administer the CIDG program. These forces were now controlled through the territorial forces. Although some members of the Special Forces had concerns about disbanding the CIDG, it was not done before they had achieved a great deal of success.<sup>29</sup>

### Endnotes

<sup>1</sup>Edward Lansdale, In The Midst Of War (New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1972), 76.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 30.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>John S. Bowman, The Vietnam War Almanac (New York: The Bison Corporation, 1985), 440.

<sup>5</sup>Roger Trinquier, Modern Warfare: A French View of Counterinsurgency (London: Pall Mall Publishers, 1961), x.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., 97.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., xiii.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., 35.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., 26.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., 55.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., 11.

<sup>12</sup>Cecil Currey, Edward Lansdale: The Unquiet American (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1988), 142.

<sup>13</sup>Lansdale, 126.

<sup>14</sup>Currey, 136.

<sup>15</sup>Lansdale, 159.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., 181.

<sup>17</sup>Currey, 178.

<sup>18</sup>Shelby Stanton, Green Berets At War (Presidio: Presidio Press, 1985), 17.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., 24.

<sup>20</sup>Bowman, 443.

<sup>21</sup>Stanton, 39.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid., 40.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid., 42.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid., 43.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid., 123.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid., 65.

<sup>27</sup>W. Scott Thompson and Donaldson D. Frizzell, The Lessons of Vietnam (New York: Crane, Russak & Company, 1977), 255.

<sup>28</sup>Bowman, 460.

<sup>29</sup>Stanton, 292.

## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSION

It was Colonel Roger Trinquier, of the French Army, who said that the great military leader is the one who knows how to win with the means at his disposal. The United States military has successfully employed indigenous people as auxiliary and irregular troops in past conflicts. A review of American use of this type of troops on three separate occasions, illustrates this fact. The U.S. Army relied upon indigenous troops in the Indian Wars, the Philippine Insurrection, and the Vietnam conflict. The Seminole Negro Indian Scouts, the Macabebe Scouts, and the Civilian Irregular Defense Group each contributed to the success and achievements of the units to which they were assigned.

All three groups willingly chose to fight in the interest of the United States because they perceived that their goals and those of the U.S. were mutual. For the Seminoles the goal was American citizenship, freedom, and a chance to finally live a relatively stable life. For the Macabebes, the goal was freedom from persecution by other tribes and an alliance with the new ruling power. The Vietnamese Irregular Defense Groups strove for freedom from persecution by the North Vietnamese and for self-rule.

These auxiliaries and irregulars forces acted as combat multipliers for their respective commanders, providing detailed intelligence about enemy forces, critical knowledge about the area of

operations, and additional firepower. This table outlines the capabilities provided by the Seminole Negro Indians, Macabebes and CIDG. In each instance, these indigenous troops allowed the commander to overcome limited resources and to significantly enhance his battlefield capability.

TABLE 2

INDIGENOUS FORCE AND CAPABILITY MATRIX

	ENEMY INTELLIGENCE	AREA INTELLIGENCE	ADDITIONAL FIREPOWER
Seminole Negro Indian Scouts	X	X	X
Macabebe Scouts	X		X
Civilian Irregular Defense Group	X		X

Note: Table 2 Capabilities provided by previous indigenous irregular and auxiliary forces.

Because they had lived among other Indian tribes and learned their methods of scouting the Seminole Negro Indians were able to provide significant information to the U.S. Army about the other Indian tribes, the Mexican border area, and the uncharted territory of the Staked Plains. The Seminoles became intimately familiar with their area of operations, while assisting the Mexican government to defeat raiders and bandits along the Texas and Mexican border. The final result of the Seminole efforts was that the number of raids by Indians and bandits along the Texas and Mexican border were greatly reduced. In combat,

these indigenous forces repeatedly served with distinction. Four of the Seminole Negro Indian Scouts received the Congressional Medal of Honor for bravery under fire.

The Macabebe Scouts were also credited with assisting the U.S. army with many successful operations during the 1898 Philippine Insurrection. The most noted operation was the capture of Emilio Aguinaldo the leader of the rebels. Although the Macabebe tribesmen were called scouts, this was a misnomer. As a rule Macabebes rarely traveled far from their own villages on a daily basis, and thus knew little about the areas away from their own homes. Therefore, their ability to guide American forces throughout the island was limited at best. The real strength of the Macabebes lay in their ability to identify rebels forces, and to provide American commanders with additional firepower. The Macabebes could easily discern between members of one Filipino tribe and another or between one dialect and another. On several occasions, the Macabebes actually served as light infantry troops and were involved in direct combat missions. The Macabebe effort to keep pressure on the rebels aided the U.S. in the favorable outcome of the insurrection.

The U.S. military again made significant use of indigenous forces while involved in the Vietnam conflict. The CIDG allowed U.S. military leaders to gain intelligence about North Vietnamese Army and Viet Cong forces. Their efforts also helped to protect large areas of South Vietnam from the influences of North Vietnam.

The CIDG was also successful because of its ability to infiltrate enemy forces, accomplished with long range reconnaissance patrols (LRRPS). Because of similarities in cultural and language these

indigenous irregular forces could move freely around the Vietnamese countryside gathering intelligence. Furthermore, by the close of 1964, nearly seventy-five thousand indigenous people around the country were incorporated into the CIDG. By being dispersed throughout the country, the CIDG was able to provide American commanders with reinforcing firepower against the North Vietnamese Army and the Viet Cong.

Although these three conflicts span a period of about one-hundred years, all of the officers that led indigenous forces achieved success through innovation and prior knowledge of indigenous troops. Lawton and several other officers who used Indian scouts in the Indian Wars also relied upon the knowledge of indigenous people during the Philippine Insurrection. Later in 1954 Lansdale brought to the Vietnam conflict his knowledge of indigenous force operation in the Philippine Islands.

The likelihood of U.S. involvement in smaller regional conflicts has increased greatly since the dissolution of the Soviet Union. United States strategic requirements demand that diplomatic, informational, and economic instruments of power be fully considered before examining a broad range of military response capabilities. Therefore, the geo-political and economic shift in the current security environment provides a perfect opportunity for the military to regain the ability to identify and employ indigenous troops as a portion of a military response to a crisis. The responsibility now lies with U.S. military leaders to maximize indigenous troops to enhance current battlefield capabilities under the strain of limited human resources.

Although the U.S. military successfully employed indigenous troops in previous conflicts, the next question, is how does the



military recreate this success in the future? Also, what might have been the outcome of deploying a U.S. military team and forming some type of indigenous forces during recent operations in Somalia or Haiti? Furthermore, if the U.S. does employ indigenous units, its motives will be closely watched by all other nations. Therefore, U.S. control, success, and interaction with indigenous forces will have to be thoroughly considered. The goal of the designated team will be to create an effective fighting force without appearing to create a puppet police force. Therefore, U.S. leaders may want to consider varying degrees of organizing, equipping, and controlling indigenous units.

Commanders will have a wide range of command and control options to choose from when deciding how to manage and utilize indigenous forces in the future. Options will include combatant command (COCOM) authority, operational control (OPCON), tactical control (TACON), and support.<sup>1</sup> Specifically, indigenous forces that are COCOM might be organized, trained, and tasked as directed by the combatant commander to achieve an objective. Although OPCON forces can be organized and employed for certain missions at the discretion of the service component commander, logistics, training, and internal organization would be determined by the leaders of the indigenous unit. Forces that are TACON would be given detailed maneuver instructions to complete a mission, but its organization would not be altered by the overall commander. Last, in some instances indigenous forces may establish a support relationship with a larger conventional force commander in which their actions may aid or complement the larger conventional force.

TABLE 3  
COMMAND AND CONTROL MATRIX

	SUPPORT	TACTICAL CONTROL	OPERATIONAL CONTROL	COMBATANT COMMAND
D E F I N I T I O N S	ACTIONS BY A FORCE TO AID OR COMPLEMENT ANOTHER FORCE.	COMMANDER CONTROLS LOCAL MANEUVER. DOES NOT PROVIDE LOGISTICAL SUPPORT OR ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGES.	COMMANDER MAY ORGANIZE AND EMPLOY AS NECESSARY. DOES NOT INCLUDE LOGISTICAL SUPPORT. TRAINING OR INTERNAL ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGES.	COMMANDER MAY ORGANIZE, TASK, EMPLOY AND TRAIN UNIT AS REQUIRED. ALSO INCLUDES LOGISTICAL SUPPORT AND AUTHORITY TO REORGANIZE
E X A M P L E S	SOMALI POLICE	DESERT STORM  HAITI POLICE	MACABEBE SCOUTS  CIDG	SEMINOLE SCOUTS

Note: Table 3 Examples of indigeous forces and their command and control relationships with U.S. forces.

### Analysis

With the absence of conflict between major powers in the past fifty years and the increasing cultural and ethnic tensions around the world, America is more likely than ever to become involved in regional conflicts.

While the United States has successfully deterred war in Europe, limited conflicts have become more pervasive.<sup>2</sup> Commanders will

be faced with nonlinear battlefields and an enemy that is capable of moving about unimpeded. The commander's challenge will be to create success with limited human resources despite these difficulties. Now is the time to conceptualize the requirements necessary to identify and employ indigenous forces successfully in the future. Therefore, the army should consider developing a unit having the specific mission of identifying and employing indigenous forces whenever and wherever American troops are deployed.

In future conflicts, it will be especially critical to choose the correct indigenous groups to serve as auxiliary and irregular troops. The combat commander will always have a need for intelligence about the enemy force, detailed knowledge about the area of operations and possibly additional firepower. Therefore, the unit designated to initially operate with the indigenous forces must accomplish two goals: first, correctly identify the optimal indigenous group to work with and, second, properly employ these forces. For the purposes of this paper, the unit chosen to accomplish this mission will be referred to as the Auxiliary Forces Detachment (AFD). Unlike a major combat task force, the AFD would be a lightly equipped infantry team made up of approximately five to ten middle grade officers and noncommissioned officers.

#### Identification

Conceptually, because of their independent actions and subsequent impact, American personnel in the AFD would need to possess exceptional military and leadership skills. They would need to be thoroughly trained and be familiar with basic and advanced individual

combat skills, small unit tactics, and numerous weapons systems. Extensive knowledge about various cultures and some degree of fluency in a foreign language would also be required to help AFD members to gain creditability among the native people and to allow for increased interaction.

In addition, the AFD team would require particular knowledge about the culture, the political structure, and the history of the country. With concern for the local society, the AFD would need to be aware of the country's different social groups, such as race, religion, tribe, or political party. There might even be subdivisions among these groups.

Understanding the true political structure of the society would also aid the AFD. The political dynamics of whether the government was a dictatorship or a democracy would be particularly important to any commander who considers employing indigenous forces. Last, the historical aspect of the society would need to be considered. The interaction of the major and minor social groups would also need to be researched for possible conflict. The AFD would also need to determine what kind of support the indigenous group would be willing to provide and how much motivation to fight the indigenous groups actually possessed. They would also need to determine if any particular group in the society has previously served as auxiliary or irregular forces.

#### Employment

The AFD team chosen to execute the mission of employing indigenous forces must be capable of unconventional warfare (UW). This

is mainly due to the fact that the indigenous force would probably be significantly smaller than the threat force. Consequently, the AFD and the indigenous irregulars would have to resort to guerrilla tactics and superior technology to gain an advantage.

TABLE 4  
COMPARISON OF CONVENTIONAL AND GUERRILLA UNITS

	Number of Soldiers		Mobility/Maneuver		Communications	
	<u>Advan</u>	<u>Disadvan</u>	<u>Advan</u>	<u>Disadvan</u>	<u>Advan</u>	<u>Disadvan</u>
Conventional Army	Large numbers of well equipped soldiers.	Lack knowledge of area. Hard to move.	Has air, ground, and sea mobility.	Has little support from citizens.	Well organized and equipped commo network.	Lacks intell on enemy movement.
Guerrilla Band	Chooses where to fight.	Small number of ill-equipped soldiers.	Supported logistically by population.	Moves only by foot.	Gains intell from the population.	Has little long range commo.

Note: Table 4 Trinquier discussed the strengths and weaknesses of conventional and guerrilla forces as they pertained to unit size, mobility, equipment, and intelligence.

The types of missions best suited for AFD and indigenous irregulars include self-defense and reconnaissance.<sup>3</sup> The AFD teams could focus on raids, ambushes, and sabotage roles. In self-defense missions the AFD could help organize, advise, and train the indigenous people in combat tactics. This role would be particularly effective as part of a larger force conducting a more involved mission. Prime examples of AFD self-defense mission are the Philippine Insurrection and the Vietnam conflict. Batson's Macabebe scouts were employed extensively on missions described as self-defense. They conducted

numerous raids and ambushes against the rebels, while larger American units like Young's provisional cavalry regiment kept pressure on the rebels. The Rhade Tribe of the CIDG also operated in a self-defense role, while contributing to the success of the larger overall U.S. mission in Vietnam. The long range patrols into enemy territory allowed the CIDG to execute several sabotage missions that hindered the efforts of the North Vietnamese Army and the Viet Cong.

Reconnaissance missions that are conducted by indigenous forces are significant combat multipliers and would be extremely important to the commander. The success of an entire mission can fail or succeed based simply on the quality of the intelligence provided. The ability to gather intelligence about the enemy would be greatly facilitated by the combination of AFD technology and tactics and indigenous knowledge of the area and people. The efforts of indigenous units conducting reconnaissance missions could be enhanced by several of the sensor capabilities that might be organic to an AFD team. In addition, techniques such as indigenous long-range patrols led by AFD teams would provide the commander two advantages. First, it would provide data to the intelligence team that would have to be interpreted by analysts. Second, it would have an enormous psychological impact on the enemy by exposing their vulnerability. For example, the extensive patrols conducted by the Seminole Negro Indian Scouts were unequaled by subsequent forces. The Seminoles could successfully follow an enemy's trail for several days and over hundreds of miles. The result, was that many Indian tribes no longer felt safe in their hidden villages in Mexico. Both the Macabebes and the CIDG were known for conducting extremely hazardous patrols deep inside enemy territory. The Macabebes

trailed the rebels from the central Luzon Province all the way to their headquarters in Palanan, and the CIDG successfully sabotaged vehicles and ammunition in enemy base camps. Therefore, by gathering intelligence for the commander and possessing the ability to strike the enemy almost anywhere on the battlefield would make AFD-developed indigenous auxiliary and irregular units a formidable asset.

Using AFD forces and indigenous irregulars and auxiliary troops has two major advantages: economy of force and increased flexibility for the force commander. By applying key assets and forces at the critical place, a relatively small group of indigenous troops could have a significant impact on an enemy unit. This capability would allow a commander to focus his conventional forces on other key targets. Furthermore, as part of a larger mission, indigenous troops led by AFD personnel could greatly increase the effects of an operation by forcing enemy leaders to divert assets that might otherwise be used against conventional forces.

The National Command Authority and the senior military leaders would be provided more flexibility across the conflict continuum by considering the employment of AFD and indigenous forces as they respond to a crisis. In this current environment of increasing regional conflicts, this type of flexibility will be of great value. The relatively small size of an AFD force would allow for quick deployments, which would be followed up by larger conventional units to allow for a rapid completion to hostilities.

Whether or not some form of an AFD is developed may depend on the resolution of future conflicts. However, the success of previous indigenous forces lends some insight to their utility. Therefore, it

would be to the advantage of the military to consider the organization of such unit.

### Doctrinal Update

A second approach to the employment of indigenous forces might be through the adjustment of current army doctrine or the creation of new army doctrine that addresses this issue. Doctrine provides commanders with a lawful guide of shared principles and beliefs about a military topic. To be sure, doctrine is designed to provide leaders with a basis or background to a particular subject about warfare.<sup>4</sup> This doctrinal approach may prove to be more viable since it requires minimal cost, equipment, and personnel to implement when compared to the development of the AFD. By approaching the employment of indigenous forces from a doctrinal perspective, commanders can be informed, educated, and trained on all aspects of indigenous irregulars and auxiliary forces.

Through leader development, commanders could explore the historical use of indigenous forces by both the United States and other countries. Also, natural organizational biases could be negated and the true value of indigenous forces might be maximized by U.S. commanders. Although the indigenous units would not necessarily serve as frontline combat forces as they have in the past, their ability to serve as scouts, conduct reconnaissance, and interpret the battlefield environment would prove invaluable. Leaders at all levels must be prepared to take complete advantage of the special capabilities of indigenous peoples.



Future success on the battlefield for the army will depend on the coordinated efforts of several organizations and units. Warfare in the future will continue to be global in nature. The army will not fight alone, but as part of a combined or joint team that has to outthink and outmaneuver the enemy.<sup>5</sup> Leaders may seek assistance from indigenous forces. Commanders may initially search for indigenous groups to employ that had goals that were supportive and complementary to the national objectives of the United States during a particular conflict. Like the Macabebes in the Philippines or the Rhade tribe in Vietnam, these groups may have been suppressed or even be in disfavor with the perceived threat force.

With respect to the development of doctrine as it applies to the employment of indigenous forces, leaders can seek guidance in the National Security Strategy (NSS) for 1994. The three central goals are:

- To credibility sustain our security with military forces that are ready to fight.

- To bolster America's economic revitalization.

- To promote democracy abroad.<sup>6</sup>

These goals will demand that U.S. Armed Forces be deployed to protect America's three categories of national interests, which are vital interests, important interests, and humanitarian interests worldwide. In attaining these goals U.S. troops will be in direct contact with indigenous forces that could be used to help achieve these objectives. The NSS calls for an integrated regional approach in responding to global conflicts. A unique and mutually supportive strategy has been considered for each region of the world.<sup>7</sup> The regions include Europe and Eurasia; East Asia and the Pacific; the Western Hemisphere; the Middle East, Southwest and South Asia; and Africa. In

general, the strategies for the regions are: security, military strength, cooperation, democracy, border tension, insurgencies, drug trafficking, the free flow of oil, and strengthening civil societies.<sup>8</sup>

Besides preparing and planning to be successful in the next war, the military now has to consider conducting operations other than war (OOTW). Although OOTW are not new to the military, the frequency and number of OOTW situations has greatly increased in the recent decades.<sup>9</sup> The OOTW environment also provides ample opportunities for commanders to consider employing indigenous units. Employing indigenous forces in an OOTW scenario supports the principles of OOTW which are objective, unity of effort, legitimacy, perseverance, restraint and security.<sup>10</sup> In particular, leaders should ensure that indigenous forces are given clear attainable objectives that support the overall mission. Commanders can achieve greater synergy if the efforts of the indigenous force support his unity of effort. For example, if the main body is conducting a movement to contact along a By adhering to the principles of legitimacy and restraint the indigenous unit can enhance its creditability with the population throughout the area of operations. Finally, commanders can increase their own units security by properly integrating the military actions of the indigenous into both offensive and defense operations.

#### Future Study

The focus of this paper was on the creation, employment, performance, and future use of the indigenous forces as auxiliary and irregular units. However, noted military historian Michael Howard stated that even though leaders study previous conflicts, they will

always struggle to be ready and properly positioned for the next military situation. In a desire to be better prepared for the next conflict, there are two topics within this paper that warrant further study.

Currently a closer study could be made of the previous experiences with indigenous forces of the key U.S. military leaders that were also directly involved with the Seminoles, the Macabebes, and the Civilian Irregulars. For example, what dealings with Indians scouts did Shafter, Mackenzie, and Bullis have before the formation of the Seminole Negro Indian unit? During the Philippine Insurrection, Lawton and Batson probably drew on previous experiences with Indians during the Indian Wars or indigenous forces in the Spanish-American War. Last, prior to their arrival in Vietnam, Lansdale and Conein were noted to have had extensive experiences with indigenous forces. It would be interesting to identify and fully research the connections of these leaders from one conflict to another, and the impact of these conflicts on their decisions.

The second topic that might require further attention would be the development and employment of other indigenous forces in other conflicts or insurgencies. Previous conflicts in Thailand, Oman, Ireland, Angola, El Salvador, and Algeria could all serve as case studies or topics for other researchers in an attempt further explore the issue of employing indigenous irregular and auxiliary forces. The desire to seek additional answers and information can best be summed up by the words of Irish poet and Nobel Prize recipient William Butler

Yeats who said "education is not the filling of a bucket, but the lighting of a fire."

### Endnotes

<sup>1</sup>FM 100-5, Operations. Headquarters, Department of the Army, Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., 4-2.

<sup>2</sup>Bulletin. Center for Army Lessons Learned, Combined Arms Training Activity, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 1.

<sup>3</sup>FM 31-20, Doctrine for Special Forces. Headquarters, Department of the Army, Government Printing Office, Washington D.C., 1-3.

<sup>4</sup>Paul Herbert, "Deciding What Has to be Done," Leavenworth Papers 16 (Combat Studies Institute, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 1988), 3.

<sup>5</sup>U.S. Army, FM 22-103. Leadership and Command at Senior Levels (Washington: Department of the Army, 1988), 2.

<sup>6</sup>The White House, National Security Strategy (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1994) I.

<sup>7</sup>*Ibid.*, 21.

<sup>8</sup>*Ibid.*, 26.

<sup>9</sup>FM 100-5, 13-0.

<sup>10</sup>*Ibid.*, 13-3.

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